

UNBEATEN RUN COMES TO AN UNHAPPY END

WYCOMBE'S unbeaten seven-match run came to a disappointing end on Saturday, when Barking, themselves struggling near the bottom of the Berger Isthmian League, gained a well-merited victory.

This was one of Wycombe's worst displays of the season, and the team appears to have gone backwards instead of forwards during the past two weeks.

They were well beaten, even though Barking's second goal did not come until time added on for stoppages at the end of the game.

Although trailing by a single goal for almost all the second half, Wanderers never looked like fighting back to snatch a draw. They had as much of the play as their opponents, but just did not threaten to score.

Jacobs off

Manager Mike Keen must surely make changes up front if the team are to regain their scoring touch. Gary Toll, once again, looked completely out of his depth and some of his colleagues are getting impatient with his lack of form.

Mr Keen, I consider, made matters worse with a remarkable substitution just after half time. He brought on winger Tony Price, for Jimmy Jacobs, who had taken over in mid-field for the injured Howard Kennedy.

This left the Blues bereft of any authority in mid-field, so although they possessed four forwards on the field, they saw very little amount of the ball.

Bumpy pitch

The defence was thus left with very little protection as Barking, who need no encouragement to attack, created numerous chances purely because of strength in numbers.

Wycombe started well enough with Mick Holfield making some fine runs down

the left, but Barking gave a warning of things to come in the 15th minute, when a brilliant three man move ended with Terry Dormer heading just wide.

Both sides took time to adjust to a hard and uneven pitch which made ball control difficult, but Barking were first to spot that it was not a day for dribbling and their quick passing game created some chances.

But their first goal came from a set piece move. Nick Ironton took a corner on the left, Dave Campbell headed on at the near post and Mick Dingwall raced in to nod the ball past Gary Lester.

Terry Glynn had a great chance to equalise just before half time, but he

somehow put the ball over the bar from three yards, in following a good work by Steve Long. It was an instinctive shot but still should have gone in.

Wycombe started to get their game together early in the second half, but immediately after Long had headed wide from a good position, Mr Keen made the substitution which surrendered the initiative to the home side.

Although forcing a number of corners, Wanderers were held comfortably at bay and Barking could have sewn up the match much earlier if coloured forward Joe Gibbs had not missed an open goal 15 minutes from the end.

Instead, they had to wait until injury time for that second goal. Gibbs' corner from the right was cleared straight to Ironton, who found the target despite a valiant attempt by George Borg to clear off the line.

This goal sealed Barking's fourth straight victory over Wycombe, who must find quick answers to their problems if they are to achieve anything in the league this season.

BARKING: B. Blake, G. Anderson, R. Makin, D. Campbell, M. Davy, S. Smith, M. Stone, N. Ironton, M. Dingwall, T. Dormer, J. Gibbs. Sub: L. Flavel (not used).

WYCOMBE: G. Lester, P. Birdseye, G. Borg, R. Davies, S. Hardwick, R. Dell, S. Long, J. Jacobs (sub: A. Price 52 mins), T. Glynn, G. Toll, M. Holfield.

Referee: G. Pearson (Kingston). **Half-time:** 1-0. **Scorers:** Barking: Dingwall (35 mins), Ironton (90).

By **MICHAEL KNOX:** Barking 2, Wycombe 0

Injury doubt over Kennedy

WYCOMBE seem set to be without the services of their experienced mid-field player Howard Kennedy for their visit to Staines Town in the Berger Isthmian League tonight (Tuesday).

Kennedy missed the match at Barking on Saturday because of a shooting pain down his leg, which he first felt a few games ago.

This could be caused by an old knee injury and Kennedy was seeing a specialist on Monday to diagnose the problem. Although he has his detractors, Kennedy is a valuable member of the side; his presence was sorely missed at Barking.

It seems that when Kennedy plays well, Wycombe play well. In addition he had been on good shooting form with two goals in the last three games.

In his absence it is difficult to see where the goals are coming from at present. Toll, on form, should be left out, provided they can find somebody better to fill the vacancy. Paul Miles would normally seem an obvious choice but he is said not to be playing well in the reserves.

Blues will need to be at their best against Staines, one of the surprise sides of the season so far. One of the players they will be facing is the former Wanderers full-back Ray Eaton who was released from the Loakes Park club at the end of last season.

In the corresponding fixture last season Staines sent Blues crashing to a 4-1 defeat. The visitors must play much better than they have recently if they are not to lose again.

Mike Keen admitted

after the Barking game: "We weren't very good. It was a bit of a battle and some people dipped. Perhaps we're too honest."

Mr Keen said he was worried about the forward line and hinted that Toll might this time be left out, with Tony Price, Terry Glynn and Steve Long forming the front three.

BERGER ISTHMIAN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Enfield	13	7	6	0	27	12	27
Bromley	11	8	3	2	21	14	21
Dagenham	13	5	6	2	24	20	21
Walthamstow	10	6	2	2	15	13	20
Dulwich	10	5	4	1	18	11	19
Slough	10	4	6	0	15	9	18
Wycombe	12	4	5	3	14	14	17
Sutton	11	4	4	3	21	19	16
Tooting	11	4	3	4	16	14	15
Woking	11	4	2	5	16	17	14
Hitchin	11	3	4	4	14	10	13
Harrow	11	3	4	4	13	11	13
Boreham Wood	11	3	4	4	12	19	13
Barking	13	4	3	6	17	25	13
Leytonstone	10	4	0	6	18	20	12
Staines	12	3	3	6	14	12	12
Leatherhead	13	2	6	5	9	14	12
Croydon	10	2	5	3	8	9	11
Harlow	12	2	5	5	15	19	11
Hayes	9	3	1	5	4	9	10
Carshalton	10	3	1	6	8	17	10
Hendon	10	1	3	6	7	16	6

*2 points deducted for fielding ineligible player.